



# *The* INNERCHANGE — Freedom Initiative™

Newton Correctional Facility

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## FAQ'S

### 1. Who is eligible for InnerChange?

The primary requirement for InnerChange is a desire to change. Inmates who successfully complete the IFI Introduction course are placed on a waiting list to come to the program. The department of corrections requires an inmate to be classified as a medium custody inmate to be eligible for IFI.

### 2. How much interest is there among the inmates in Iowa to come to the IFI program?

As of February 1, we have 572 inmates on our contact list who have initiated contact with IFI staff to communicate interest in the program. Our next class starts on April 1<sup>st</sup> and already 40 of the 55 available beds are taken. We have 64 inmates identified who will be offered a bed for the class beginning in July.

### 3. Is it necessary to be a Christian to be a part of the IFI program?

No. You do not have to be a Christian to come to IFI or to complete the program. All inmates who are in the IFI community have volunteered to be here. They come with the understanding that staff teach from a Christian worldview. We have had inmates come to IFI who were Buddhists, Muslims and those who have come with no religious beliefs at all.

### 4. Is it possible for an inmate to be discharged from the program because of their beliefs or academic failure?

No. The only reason a member is asked to leave the program is for behavioral problems. IFI staff work with members to change inappropriate behavioral patterns. We understand that there is a wide variability in the IFI members' educational background. Tutoring is available to any inmate and no one is ever asked to leave because they are struggling academically as long as they are engaged and participating in the program.

### 5. How does InnerChange deal with separation of church/state issues?

The state has a compelling interest to reduce recidivism and promote public safety. The state of Iowa designs a request for proposal for desired services. Any provider is allowed to bid that can fulfill the tenets of the proposal. The Supreme Court has said that no state aid should go to religious groups incapable of differentiating between an important

secular purpose and their religious mission. Such groups were "pervasively sectarian". By contrast, IFI seeks to accomplish an important secular purpose, i.e. reducing recidivism rates. It does this without sacrificing its religious identity or its religious message delivered through its staff and volunteers. Since there are important religious program elements that the State may not fund, IFI will only receive funding to serve the important governmental and secular purposes to be accomplished through nonsectarian program elements.

**6. What is the community involvement in the IFI program?**

We have trained 690 volunteers. They are from 139 cities in 9 states. Over 100 churches across the state of Iowa have agreed to partner with the IFI program. Currently, we have over 90 volunteers coming to the prison per week. This represents over 180 volunteers delivered per week.

**7. What statistics are available to tell us how well IFI is working?**

The Texas legislature uses the Criminal Justice Policy Council to evaluate all programming related to the Texas criminal justice system. Their independent evaluation of the IFI program in Texas yields an 8% recidivism rate. This rate applies to all IFI graduates who have been released for two or more years. In Iowa, we have 110 inmates in aftercare. Of those, we have had 6 inmates be reconvicted of a crime. Our rate, although preliminary, is a promising 5.5%.

**8. What is aftercare?**

When an inmate is released, we promise to do several things. We assist them in finding a church of their choice back in the community. We provide them with a mentor who will meet with them on a regular basis. If they have needs for housing or employment, we assist to meet those needs. If clothing is needed, churches have responded by donating clothing.

**9. What is the potential for InnerChange?**

Many states have inquired and/or visited InnerChange sites. Five states are actively seeking contracts to establish InnerChange programs. IFI has the promise of not only reducing recidivism which decreases the number of victims but also can save state funds that can be reallocated to other priorities. Currently in Iowa, 66% of all released inmates are reconvicted of a new felony or misdemeanor within five years.

**10. Who makes up the IFI community?**

We currently have 217 inmates in the IFI community. The average age is 34. They range from 17 to 62 years old. 29% of the inmates currently in the program have been incarcerated previously. Over half of the inmates have been convicted for drug-related offenses. The other offenses range from property crimes to vehicular homicide to violent crimes including assault, robbery and murder.

## **CORE PROGRAM AREA: *RE-ENTRY***

### **COURSE NAME**

Re-entry

### **BASIC DESCRIPTION**

The program is designed to prepare inmates nearing release to reenter their families and communities. It informs the inmates of transition issues and helps build a realistic expectation of life after incarceration.

### **GOALS**

The goals for this program for the member include;

- Facing potential challenges
- Developing positive thinking and decision making skills
- Living independently
- Setting goals
- Expected employment skills
- Developing a realistic self image and appraisal
- Interviewing skills
- Money management
- Locating community services
- Acquiring and utilizing transportation
- Developing healthy relationships
- Considerations of marriage
- Healthy support and leisure activities
- Developing healthy partnerships and mentoring relationships
- Future planning

### **REQUIREMENTS**

The course is taught and facilitated by an IFI counselors.

The course is two hours per week lasting for 12 weeks.

Instructors receive a manual and videos (if available), and will be provided by the program manager. There will be a book/workbook available for each member. Members are required to fill out weekly assignments as prescribed in the book/workbook. Course is practical in nature and is orientated toward member involvement.

### **TEXT/MATERIALS**

- *Life Plan Re-entry* (PF)

## **CORE PROGRAM AREA: RE-ENTRY**

### **COURSE NAME**

Financial Management

### **BASIC DESCRIPTION**

This course on financial management is presented to the inmate for the purpose of creating a money conscious believer. In most cases the average inmate has seen money as his pathway to boundless self-involvement, entertainment, and pleasure. The average inmate sees money as his necessary right to have so he can get what he wants now. This course will seek to bluntly inform the inmate of the primary biblical principal as stated in the book of Psalms, "the earth is the LORD'S and everything in it". This includes his money. In addition to this the biblical warning that, "the LOVE of money is the root of evil," has and does apply to the way they have always lived their lives, and now with the scriptures guidance this is going to change.

### **GOALS**

The goals for this program for the member include;

- To gain an understanding that money is to be earned by hard work and is a by-product directly of the expenditure of their time and life's energy and so therefore is a direct representation of stewardship of their very life.
- To achieve an increased level of knowledge about money and develop a strategy for living, saving and investing according to biblical principals.
- To understand that a budget is necessary for achieving the good life that God has prepared for us
- To prepare for the onslaught of American cultural consumerism that feeds a mentality of buy now, easy credit, do not prepare for tomorrow, in light of strong biblical principles to the contrary.
- To plan a lifestyle of living beneath your means so that you can have money to invest in the Kingdom of God.
- To move the inmate to plan for his financial future in the areas of, owning a home, using credit wisely, saving for college, preparing for retirement, and moving out of debt.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

As required by the instructor each inmate will be required to complete the following during the course of this class:

24 hrs. of instruction per quarter, at the rate of 2hrs. per day per week for 12 weeks. Reading and familiarity with assigned portions of the material will be required. The planning of a mock budget and other assignments with the necessity of active class participation will be required. Each inmate will be expected to plan for his own future and confront his own lack of stewardship in his past as he prepares for life outside the wire.

### **TEXT/MATERIALS**

- *Living Financially Free* (Paris)
- *How to Manage Your Money* (Burkett)

## **CORE PROGRAM AREA: *MARRIAGE AND FAMILY***

### **COURSE NAME**

Marriage/Parenting

### **BASIC DESCRIPTION**

This curriculum is broad and biblically based and is designed to give each man foundation and practical tools to develop their roles and responsibilities as husbands and fathers. The material will be taught through a combination of video and a lecture format. Each man will be responsible for his own workbook assignments and be encouraged to interact. This curriculum is designed to impact men and to provide them with the knowledge and tools to maintain healthy marriages and to develop a godly legacy through their children.

### **GOALS**

The goals for this program for the member include:

- To portray the role and responsibility of a couple.
- To portray the role and responsibility of the wife.
- To portray the role and responsibility of the husband.
- To give each member problem solving techniques in their marriage. I.e. in-laws, money, sex, romance, communication, and loyalty.
- How to discipline children
- What God expects of godly parents
- How to cope with rebellion
- How to plant the Word of God in the heart of a child
- How to help children with their habits, fears, money, and friends
- How to help a child discover his/her destiny
- How to help a child experience God firsthand
- To establish what kids need most in a Dad
- To develop skills for fathers not to provoke their children to anger
- To assist each member in offering them a "toolbox" of ideas, activities, suggestions, warnings, and strategies which can be readily put to use.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

A qualified volunteer (8 hours of training) is required to facilitate each small group. Each class will begin with a video presentation then break into small groups. There will be one volunteer per group. (if available)

The course is two hours per week lasting for 12 weeks. The course requires a place where a small group can be accommodated. The recommended size of the group is 12.

Instructors receive a manual and videos (if available), and will be provided by the program manager. There will be a book/workbook available for each member. Members are required to fill out weekly assignments as prescribed in the book/workbook.

### **TEXT/MATERIALS**

- *A Biblical Portrait of Marriage* (Wilkinson)
- *A Marriage Without Regrets* (Arthur)
- *Parenting* (Campbell)
- *Raising Faithful Kids* (Faulkner)
- *The Blessing* (Smalley)
- *Spirit-Filled Family* (Hayford)
- *Spiritual Protection for Your Family* (Stanley)

## **CORE PROGRAM AREA: *RE-ENTRY***

### **COURSE NAME**

Mentoring

### **BASIC DESCRIPTION**

To establish and foster a mentoring relationship for all IFI members with a positive role model in the community. A mentor provides modeling, close supervision, and help in areas of discipline, encouragement, correction, confrontation, and provides a source of accountability.

### **GOALS**

The goals for this program for the member include;

- A mentor is a source of information
- A mentor shares wisdom
- A mentor promotes specific skills and effective behaviors
- A mentor provides feedback
- A mentor is a coach
- A mentor is a sounding board
- A mentor is someone who supports
- A mentor helps devise a plan
- A mentor nurtures positive curiosity

### **REQUIREMENTS**

Mentors are approved IFI/DOC volunteers who receive seven hours of pre-service training.

A six-hour mentor training is offered for mentors working with released members.

They spend a minimum of two hours per week for 24 weeks while the member is still incarcerated.

After release the mentor is asked to commit three to five hours per week with the IFI member.

### **TEXT/MATERIALS**

- *As Iron Sharpens Iron* (Hendricks)
- *Disciplines of a Godly Man* (Hughes)

## **CORE PROGRAM AREA: VOCATIONAL**

### **COURSE NAME**

Principles of Business and Industry

### **BASIC DESCRIPTION**

This course provides basic assessment and training needed to enter employment in the fields of manufacturing and industry. It provides an assessment of current strengths and areas for improvement, an overview of current manufacturing and business principles, and practical skill training for employment.

### **GOALS**

The goals for this program for the member include;

- Assess and develop applied math skills
- Locating information as it applies to industry
- Utilizing applied technology
- Developing listening and communication skills
- Reading and interpreting technical information
- Technical writing skills
- Orientation for transition into manufacturing
- Safety compliance
- Lean manufacturing methods
- Conflict, collaboration, and teamwork in the workplace
- Managing priorities
- Personal strategies for navigating change
- Blueprint reading
- Production welder training
- Career counseling

### **REQUIREMENTS**

The course is taught and facilitated by a combination of volunteers and IFI counselors.

Volunteers are professionals from the business, manufacturing, industry and educational communities of central Iowa.

The course is two, two-hour sessions per week lasting for 12 weeks.

Instructors prepare material based on the subject area to be taught. Some components are Directed Self Learning (DSL) in nature. DSL components are computer-based. Members are required to fill out weekly assignments as prescribed in the book/workbook. Course is practical in nature and is orientated toward member involvement.

### **MATERIALS**

- *Various* (per-instructor)
- *KeyTrain for WorkKeys* (Computer DSL)

## **CORE PROGRAM AREA: *VICTIM IMPACT***

### **COURSE NAME**

Sycamore Tree

### **BASIC DESCRIPTION**

This course addresses crime and its impact on others. It is designed to build awareness and empathy in the minds and hearts of perpetrators of crime.

### **GOALS**

The goals for this program for the member include;

- Understanding crime and its effects.
- Understanding the relationships between victims and offenders
- Understanding the effects of domestic violence and child abuse
- Understanding responsibility after offense
- Understanding the effects of property crime and DUI
- Principles of disclosure/confession
- Principles of repentance
- Principles of forgiveness
- Principles of reconciliation
- Principles of restitution

### **REQUIREMENTS**

This course will be 12 weeks in length. It will meet weekly for a period of two hours. The class will include lectures, small group work, classroom discussion and exercises and individual one on one counseling sessions and a victims panel.

### **TEXT/MATERIALS**

- *Sycamore Tree* (PF)
- *Loving Justice*